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GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

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EVALUATION REPORT

ON WORKING OF

COMMUNITY PROJECTS AND N. E. S. BLOCKS

SUMMARY—Part I

APRIL 1956

PLANNING COMMISSION

PROGRAMME EVALUATION ORGANISATION

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SUMMARY OF PART I "EVALUATION REPORT"

Section I.—The Process of Development

General

1. In the more successful among community projects, there can be no doubt that in terms of provision of basic amenities needed by the people—education, health and sanitation, water supplies, communications—a distinct advance has been made during the project period. Under the rising tempo of development expenditure under the First Five Year Plan, the increase in non-project development expenditure has also been very considerable in most of the project areas.

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2. The people have demonstrated convincingly their desire for progress and their willingness not only to adopt but also to contribute towards any measure about whose utility they are convinced. They have welcomed the opportunity provided by the projects to meet their urgent needs, and have responded by contributing their share in increasing measure.

3. More and more villages have been coming forward to take up the development programme, and during the closing stages many of the projects have been faced with the problem of selecting which of the numerous demands from villagers they should satisfy first in the limited time and funds left at their disposal.

4. In the field of extension*, however, success has been neither as general nor as marked. Here, there is not yet that evidence of a difference in outlook, an eagerness for change, and a new enthusiasm which one sees in case of the amenities programmes in most projects.

5. The limitations of project programme in some fields, notably co-operation, cottage industries and housing and the projects' inability to provide the special assistance needed by the artisans, the landless labourers or other under-privileged groups, or to develop adequate programmes for women and youth have by now been generally recognized, and special programmes for meeting some of them (*e.g.* in village industries) have already been started. Also, in all current thinking on the content of the programme, primary emphasis is being placed on making it more comprehensive and in particular on enabling it to reach those sections which have not been adequately benefited so far.

6. The main contribution of these three years, however, has not been so much in the physical improvements as in the change in outlook that has been created both among the officials and the

* The word "extension" is used in the sense of carrying knowledge of better ways of doing things in all fields—agriculture, animal husbandry, health, sanitation, housing etc.

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people. The response obtained from the three years' work in community projects and the changes which have already been brought about in some of them, have created among the officials a confidence that given the correct approach, requisite personnel and other needed resources, a definite impact can be produced in a given area within a relatively short time. Among the people, the initial scepticism and apathy towards official effort are giving way to confidence in the government's genuine interest in their betterment and especially in their own capacity to organize themselves for collective efforts and to achieve the improvements desired.

7. The rate of progress, however, is not uniform in different areas. In many backward areas where the basic facilities were completely lacking, the programme was greeted with tremendous enthusiasm. On the other hand, in parts where such facilities were already well developed and there was not enough in the content of the programme to meet the most urgent needs of the people, it did not evoke any particular enthusiasm and has proceeded like any ordinary governmental programme.

C. P. and N. E. S.—An agency for Social Change

8. For a proper appreciation of the achievements as also the limitations of this programme, it is necessary to bear in mind that the community projects and the national extension service represent primarily an agency for carrying a programme of development and reforms to the people. The success of the effort cannot be judged solely in terms of the effectiveness of the agency; equally important is the content of the development programmes and reforms which are sought to be carried through the agency.

9. This relationship between the project agency and the overall development plans and policies on the one hand and the existing state of technical knowledge and experience on the other, needs to be appreciated much more clearly than has been done so far.

10. This agency offers an effective means of taking new reforms, policies and technical advances to the people. But it must be clear that the utility and effectiveness of the agency itself are dependent upon the content of the development programmes which are sought to be propagated. The effectiveness of a community project or N.E.S. block would in future depend not merely on the programmes which are included under its own budget and *proformas* but also on those which are being simultaneously implemented in the area.

11. From this standpoint, the three steps which appear to be of greatest significance for the future progress of the programme are: (i) Strengthening the technical departments; (ii) Development of popular institutions; and (iii) Providing suitable administrative

arrangements for co-ordination between the extension agency on the one hand and the technical departments and popular institutions on the other. Each of these has been discussed in appropriate later sections.

Transition to N.E.S.

12. The effects of the programme especially of the amenities portions, have been very uneven in different villages. These differences have been due to various factors, among which perhaps accessibility and "response from the villagers" are most important.

13. In their anxiety to incur expenditure and achieve physical targets within the limited project period, the Project Officers have often tended to concentrate attention especially in the works and amenities programmes upon villages from which response was most easily forthcoming. Therefore, when the projects are closed, the feeling of having 'missed the bus' on the part of a large number of villages is inevitable.

14. The emphasis on physical and financial accomplishments—getting targets achieved, expenditure incurred, buildings constructed is on the increase. The efforts at creating a more progressive outlook, and educating the people into new ways of doing things, are being given a secondary place in the anxiety to get things done and moneys spent. Even among physical accomplishments, preference in many areas is distinctly for the spectacular as against the less noticeable though more lasting and fundamental improvement. Such emphasis towards execution, and especially towards construction activities has been strengthened during the last year.

15. Both for obtaining maximum benefits from the efforts already put in by the project staff, for fully utilizing the enthusiasm aroused among the village people, as also to avoid any feeling of having been left out among the villagers, the amenity schemes should continue to be available on a contributory basis. The proportions of contributions from the State can even be reduced somewhat, because the benefits of the scheme are now more widely appreciated, and villagers in many areas are prepared to contribute larger proportions. But any withdrawal of the scheme at this stage would not be desirable. The unspent balances of these projects should be allowed to be carried over and should be made available for the amenities programmes and for other efforts needed in the area.

16. In future, in the community projects conscious efforts should be made to bring all villages within the orbit of the programme and in particular to extend the amenities and other benefits more evenly. This implies that there will be greater emphasis on preparing the villagers and less on securing physical accomplishments

within the shortest possible time and also that a somewhat longer period will be available for the community project stage.

Maintenance of facilities

17. Sufficient thought has not been given so far to arrangements for maintenance of facilities after the project period is over, and in many areas arrangements even in respect of such facilities as schools have not yet been finalised. Responsibility for maintenance should be fixed clearly between the panchayats, the District Agency and the State Departments according to the particular conditions in each State.

18. The problem of maintenance is seen to be much easier where people's organizations like the panchayats are already well developed. The existing differences in development of local institutions in different areas, should be taken into account, when considering the post-project phase and any special steps needed in view of retarded development in particular areas should be provided for.

Further stages in Development

19. What has been achieved in the community projects marks but the beginning of the process of intensive development. With the provision of amenities, the physical impediments to progress have been removed, and with the confidence which has been engendered among the people, a more favourable psychological climate has been created.

20. Development is a continuous process, and the various stages— N.E.S.; C.P. and post-C.P.—have to be thought of as different stages in the development of an area. These should be organically related, one should lead on to the next, so that the area attains steadily a more rapid and comprehensive rate of progress with increasing self-reliance by the people in their own efforts.

21. In determining the set-up and activities for the post-C.P. phase in an area, three major principles should be kept in view:

(i) They should be in accord with the main lines of the long-term economic and social development of the area as indicated by its needs and resources.

(ii) They should provide for effective and close co-ordination of the efforts of the project agency with the larger programme of development in the area.

(iii) There should be considerable flexibility in terms of finance, staff and organization which should be determined primarily by the content of the programme being undertaken in this phase.

In most of the projects, the activities of the project agency in this phase will have to concentrate on three main fields—(i) agricultural extension; (ii) industrial extension; and (iii) building up the popular institutions, the co-operatives and the panchayats.

22. The process of intensive development of an area which has been called "community development" is thus seen to be composed of at least two stages. In the first stage, the primary emphasis may be on provision of amenities; but in the second it must shift to intensive efforts in development of agriculture and village industries and strengthening of the institutional structure. In case of the first community projects, only the first stage is being completed, and they are now ready for undertaking the intensive extension effort needed for the second.

Section II.—Strengthening the Technical Departments

23. In order that the departments may be able to meet the increasing demand of the extension agency, and also that the expansion of the N.E.S. and C.P. programme itself may yield its fullest benefits, a rapid and major strengthening of the technical departments is essential in all branches and at all levels.

24. The need for further research will become even more urgent when the N.E.S. pattern is extended over the whole country. Besides general expansion of research facilities, strengthening of research units nearer to the field is needed. Having a research unit at the headquarters of every district may be one feasible step.

25. In particular, it would be necessary to strengthen greatly the channel of flow of information from the field to the research unit so that the research staff may be constantly alive to the experience and the requirements of the field.

26. Next perhaps only to expansion of research facilities is the importance of strengthening the departmental organization at the district and field level in both numbers and quality. As at present even some 'A' States do not have an officer in every district for such activities as animal husbandry and public health.

27. The calibre of the District Officer, his organization, the research facilities at his back will all have to be considerably improved. Without such strengthening, the efforts of the Grama Sewak and other extension staff will not only not bring any results but may lead to increasing frustration among them and the cultivators. When an intensive and concerted effort is being made for development, when welfare facilities are being greatly expanded, and a country-wide extension agency is being organised, the present set-up

of development departments is completely inadequate in most fields and if not suitably strengthened, will act as the proverbial "weak link in the chain".

Section III.—Popular Institutions

28. The importance of building up popular institutions—co-operatives in the economic and panchayats in the civic, judicial and political fields—has now become an accepted objective of policy, and concrete programmes of strengthening both these institutions are being drawn up for the period of the Second Five Year Plan.

29. In the initial stages development officials in many areas, largely to get over the difficulties caused by factions or apathy among the panchayats, were in favour of constituting ad-hoc bodies like Vikas Mandals for carrying out development programmes. But, it is now widely recognized that for carrying out development functions of any type on a continuing basis, only a representative body with statutory powers like the panchayat can be made responsible, and all efforts should be directed towards creating and strengthening such institutions. The role of ad-hoc bodies is considered significant only in the absence of panchayats or as committees constituted for specific purposes.

30. The coming of the projects with large funds available for amenities programmes has acted as a stimulus to panchayats in most areas. Also, the progress of programmes requiring people's participation has been much better where well constituted panchayats existed than in areas where these agencies were absent. The panchayats themselves have benefited occasionally by taking up construction work. But the general experience with the panchayats taking up such work is not altogether satisfactory.

31. The responsibilities which are sought to be given to the panchayats and especially the increasingly important role of the panchayat agency in the economic and social life of the rural areas will not be fulfilled by merely "leaving it to them to do it". Even provision of adequate financial assistance, though the first need, will not be sufficient. Guidance and active assistance will be necessary for a considerable period before the panchayats actively discharge the responsibilities being put upon them. The experience of the community projects themselves points towards this conclusion very forcefully.

32. Finally, it is essential for the healthy growth of the panchayats that our ideas on their form, pattern of organization and structure should not be too rigid. The traditional panchayat of village leaders was constituted on a very different basis; its functions were different, and from what some of the studies of

village social organizations reveal delegation of authority to members was much less complete. In the greatly changed and rapidly changing patterns of social organization, the traditional panchayat would be untenable. But it must be realised that the new institutions can also flourish only if it is in accord with the new and emerging social structure. That the existing forms of panchayat organization have not yet reached this stage in any part of the country, is quite apparent from their working.

Section IV.—Inter-Departmental Co-ordination

33. In a number of States, especially in the North, the Collectors have not yet been actively brought into the picture. Also in many areas, the Collectors, in spite of their best efforts, cannot give sufficient time to development programmes.

34. The dual control of the block level subject matter specialists, with the B.D.O. controlling all their movements and exercising administrative control and the district level technical officers exercising technical control is still not working satisfactorily. It has also happened in many cases that the departmental officers have concentrated attention in the non-block areas, where they had more direct control on their specialist staff.

35. In all technical matters, the opinion of the departmental specialist should be final, and they should be brought more and more into the day-to-day guidance of the block level subject matter staff.

36. In most States, the posts of B.D.Os. are now being filled predominantly by revenue men. In order to utilize the different kinds of experience needed for this post, as also to obviate any feelings of being excluded on the part of the other departments, appointments to the posts of B.D.Os. should be made not from one but from a number of departments. Suitable youngmen who show capacity for leadership, aptitude for general development work and understandnig of the overall development needs of rural areas, should be selected for this post, regardless of which department they belong to.

37. Further, the problem of co-ordination has to be seen not merely as one of the present relations between the project or block staff and certain development departments. It has to be seen as the basic problem of ensuring that the administrative arrangements enable the project or block agency to carry to the people reforms whose range, scope and impact on people's life will be continually increasing and in which an increasing number of technical departments will be participating.

38. The role of the B.D.O. has to be perceived as that of an 'area specialist', who unlike the technical officers is concerned not with any particular aspect of the development programme but with all aspects in a particular area. For him to succeed in this role, it is essential that he should have the necessary breadth of outlook and both his training and background should equip him suitably for this role.

Section V.—The Role of the Grama Sewak.

39. The Grama Sewak's role was conceived as that of a person who aroused the people to better effort, better ways of living and taught them how to achieve these in practice. The emphasis was on agricultural improvement. The actual role of the Grama Sewak, however, has varied very considerably in different projects depending upon their particular circumstances. In many projects, a considerable proportion of the Grama Sewak's time has been taken up in physical distribution of seed, fertilizers etc., and in arranging for loans for these things. Also, as the emphasis of the programme has gradually shifted to construction activities, these have taken an increasing proportion of the Grama Sewak's time. Thus, there has existed a gap between what the Grama Sewak was supposed to do and what he actually had to do in the field—a gap which has led to some misunderstanding between the field and the training men; the former finding the training too theoretical and the latter seeing that the Grama Sewak was not doing the things for which he was trained.

40. There is a danger that the roles imposed on the Grama Sewak because of certain immediate needs may obscure his real and proper functions. A re-definition of the roles and functions of the Grama Sewak is, therefore, necessary. The need for such re-definition is even more urgent for the National Extension Service areas where if the Grama Sewak's attention is primarily devoted to works programmes, he will soon exhaust his usefulness.

41. The experiment of combining the posts of Grama Sewak and Panchayat Secretary has been tried in a few projects. It has not been successful and has had to be given up after some time. Although close contact and co-operation between the Grama Sewak and the panchayat are absolutely essential, it is not necessary to secure these by combining the two posts.

42. The experience of combining extension with other duties has not been very happy and the routine administrative jobs involved in the 'other duties' tend to take preference over the extension roles. Where besides development functions like land management, collection of land revenue (or, as was tried in Saurashtra, maintenance of land records) are also given to the

panchayats, the difficulties of combination of the posts of Panchayat Secretary and Grama Sewak will be greatly increased. Apart from the large number of duties and their diverse nature, there is the more fundamental consideration against this combination, of the inadvisability of combining the tax collection and extension roles in the same person.

43. As regard co-operative societies, if formal association of the Grama Sewak is considered necessary, this can be best secured by making him an *ex-officio* director of the society. Any further association would be neither desirable nor is it really indicated by the requirements of the case.

44. In considering any steps about the functions of the Grama Sewak, his primary role of an extension agent should not be lost sight of. That this role is important is only to reiterate the objectives of this programme. Any combination of functions which may be thought of should be judged from the criterion of whether it helps the Grama Sewak in his primary role.

Section VI.—Records

45. The feeling that records are an 'unnecessary burden' if not a 'hindrance to actual work', which is still commonly held by many a fieldman, has to give place to a genuine appreciation of their usefulness as an aid in achieving the objectives of the programme before any material improvement can take place. Too numerous, superfluous or ill-designed records can be a hindrance to work, but their essential purpose is that of an aid to the field officer and his staff.

46. The status of maintenance of records in many areas at present is not even sufficient for securing purely administrative ends. The main defect is lack of regular and thorough check of the records maintained by the supervisory officers. Without accurate recording and meticulous checking at the field level, no amount of work at higher levels can give reliable data on the progress of the programme.

47. In the two-way flow of information between research and the field which is essential for growth of extension, careful record-keeping by the Grama Sewaks has a crucial importance.

Section VIII.—Agricultural Extension

48. Success in agricultural extension cannot be measured in terms merely of physical accomplishments. It has to be judged much more by the preparedness of the people to continue the adoption of the improved practices without further persuasion.

49. The cultivators have shown themselves quick to accept improvements which offer them decisive, tangible gains and in the adoption of which no major difficulty is encountered.

50. The most notable advance has been in respect of chemical fertilizers, in the use of which availability of credit has been of crucial importance. Now that fertilizers have begun to be used extensively the need for research in soils to determine their fertility levels and fertilizer requirements has become urgent.

51. Practices like green manuring and compost pits, have not yet taken root. Although the value of both these practices as measures of agricultural improvement is undoubted, it appears that all the difficulties experienced by cultivators in carrying them out have not been fully resolved. For example, compost pits are often located at a distance from the house and carrying refuse to them involves additional labour for which there is no incentive for the person who actually does this work.

52. Although use of improved seeds has received considerable impetus in some projects, in a number of others the programme has been of a limited character. Not only has no effort been made for introducing varieties, but even the supplies of nuclear seeds needed to maintain the quality of existing improved varieties have not been provided.

53. In case of seed, supplies constitute a major problem. With the extension of the N.E.S. over the whole country the pressure on the supply lines will continuously and rapidly increase and unless a sizeable strengthening in supply sources, seed multiplication farms, and in arrangements for procurements from registered growers etc. is effected, the problem will be no nearer solution.

54. In case of improved implements, the achievements even in the few areas where there has been an effective programme are only moderate. The number of implements which can be considered as real improvements is small. Also, unless improved implements are manufactured and repaired locally, their adoption by the cultivators is bound to be slow. This is an instance in which agricultural and industrial extension are closely inter-linked.

Extension versus Arrangements and Supplies

55. To a certain extent association of the Grama Sewak with credit and supply functions may even help him in his extension work. However, it is essential that he regards himself primarily as an 'adviser' and not a 'service man'. He must have both the time and competence to help progressive farmers with their specific problems; otherwise his extension role will remain largely unfulfilled.

Need for comprehensive advice—

56. Instead of confining attention merely to propagation of individual practices, more comprehensive advice on how a cultivator may manage his farm operations better, has to be given to atleast

a few selected cultivators in each area. Cultivators should be carefully selected for such advice, care being taken to include representatives of different sizes of holdings. Their number should be small enough to enable the Grama Sewak to give them the intensive attention required. This appears to be one feasible method of tackling the problem of helping individual families make development plans of their own on which little has been done so far. The plans which are gradually evolved for such families can serve as 'models' for guidance of other cultivators.

Section IX.—Animal Husbandry

57. In this field, most of the work done so far has been on the veterinary as distinct from the animal husbandry side. Considerable progress has been made in most areas in treatment of diseases and control of epidemics. The facilities provided have been enthusiastically received and the people have given the requisite contributions for them.

58. The main advance in future should be in the direction of supplementary veterinary aid, the kind which can be rendered by the Grama Sewak or even a trained villager, through a medicine chest placed with the Panchayat. This has been successfully tried in a few areas (*e.g.*, Manavadar—Saurashtra).

59. Progress in improvement of breeding and feeding practices which will make for permanent improvement in live-stock has been very slow. Without a programme of improvement in quality, reduction in cattle mortality will only make for rapidly increasing number, making the problem of any permanent improvement in live-stock increasingly difficult.

60. The problem of securing adequate fodder supply is undoubtedly very difficult. But in most parts, it is possible to increase fodder supplies considerably through improvement of grazing practices and greater attention to growing of fodder crops and fodder grasses. Good results can be achieved by concentrating efforts for popularizing fodder crops at times when through introduction of irrigation, reclamation or consolidation of holdings etc., agricultural productivity is being raised.

Section X.—Irrigation, Reclamation and Soil Conservation

Irrigation—

61. Irrigation continues to claim a large share in the budgets of most projects. The main role of the project agency in this field has been one of making available loans for construction of wells, purchase of pumping sets or similar small improvements which the cultivators can themselves undertake. But the experience with

construction of even small irrigation works by the project agency itself has not been very encouraging, due to the very limited technical skills and organisation available with the project agency.

62. The project agency has a valuable extension role in the field of irrigation which could be attended to much more actively than has been done so far. In many areas, where irrigation is not developed to any extent, there are considerable possibilities of developing it (*e.g.*, through lift irrigation schemes), which can be demonsrated to the cultivators. This has been successfully done in a few cases. In areas where irrigation is already developed, the potentialities of the extension approach are, if anything, greater, because there is considerable scope for improvement in irrigation techniques. In most of these areas, enormous losses of irrigation waters take place which could be prevented through application of known techniques of water conservation. Through suitable co-ordination with irrigation departments, and if necessary, by posting special irrigation assistants in the project areas, scientific water conservation methods can be taken to the cultivators.

Section XI.—Health and Sanitation

Medical Facilities—

63. The targets in respect of medical facilities have been achieved in most projects, and if in some progress has been slow, there are atleast a few others where the targets themselves had to be raised because of the keen demand from the people. People's contribution has also been available in the requisite degree.

64. Below the level of the Medical Officer and the primary health centre, some medical assistance is needed and should be provided. The qualifications and other details about the functionary who may render such assistance, are matters which the medical people themselves can best judge. But not providing any assistance below this level is only to encourage half-trained people and quacks to flourish in the villages as is already happening in a few project areas.

65. Water supply is most urgently felt need, and in most areas people have whole-heartedly given the needed contributions for it. The Scheduled Castes and other backward classes have found in the water supply programmes, the main evidence of the community projects' concern for them.

66. It is true that many villages even in project areas continue to be insanitary and measures like soakage pits and latrines have met with only indifferent response. Yet the enthusiasm with which a programme like pavement of streets and construction of drains which is comparatively expensive and calls for considerable sacrifices on their part has been taken up can leave no one in any doubt

about the villagers' desire to live better. Apparently, the villagers are much more attracted towards measures which appear to them to make substantial and real differences in their living conditions than those which appear to be only half measures. Another reason for lack of enthusiasm for many of the measures like latrines is that these do not take into account fully the villagers' needs and are found by them to be unsatisfactory in practice.

67. The experience of the community projects points to the great need for research in the problems of rural sanitation. Reference is made above to defective designs of latrines. Even in case of streets and drains, defects in layout of streets or in size, shape or location of drains, often lead to accumulation of sullage water. Again, the introduction of hand-pumps is introducing a new factor which would make the problems of drainage even more difficult. The stage has come when an integrated and comprehensive programme of sanitation improvement should be offered to a village, which it may take up in stages according as its resources permit. That some villages will take up such programmes and provide an example to others is amply proved by the experience of the last three years.

Section XII.—Education

68. The need for school facilities especially for boys can be considered to have been satisfactorily met in most projects. In a few projects there is now a primary school in every village, and in a number of others the position has been reached when no child has to walk more than a mile or so to go to a school. The programme of construction of school buildings on a contributory basis has also achieved noteworthy success in most projects. The new school building is often the finest building in the village and stands out as a symbol of the villagers' desire for progress.

69. Such universal availability of school facilities emphasizes the importance of speedily implementing the needed educational reforms, because every expansion of educational facilities also increases the area on which these reforms will have to be carried out. It may be mentioned in this connection that progress in conversion of schools into basic type and especially in effecting the improvements envisaged in this conversion, has been markedly slow.

Section XIII.—Social Education

70. The tempo of work in social education has recorded a marked improvement in almost all projects during the past year and there has also been increasing appreciation of the work being done. But, in spite of the very considerable advance already made,

it cannot still be said that either the handicaps which beset the progress of the programme earlier have been completely overcome, or that the new functionary, the S.E.O., has established himself as a member of the project team of specialists.

71. The steps which are now being taken to develop the organisation both above and below the level of the S.E.O., by appointing Social Education Officers at the State and district levels and by drawing the school teacher into the programme are welcome developments.

72. If the S.E.Os. are really to fulfil their educational role, they must select specific problems about which they not only suggest the need for change, but can also effectively demonstrate to the people what is required to be done.

73. The system of recruitment of S.E.O. and especially the criteria for recruitment call for careful reconsideration. In selecting people for this job, greater emphasis needs to be placed on rural background, love of rural areas and rural people. If necessary, the academic qualifications may be reduced. The Grama Sewaks themselves furnish a very suitable field for recruitment of S.E.Os. The more successful among them who show aptitude for group leadership and social work may be given opportunities for rising to this post.

Work among Youth:

74. The school teachers' role would be particularly important in programmes for youth and other social education activities. The schools appear to be the most suitable nucleus around which a vigorous youth programme can be built and the village school teacher is the best local guide for such a programme.

Work among Women:

75. At a stage when comprehensive programme for women which may benefit all sections of the population has yet to begin, concentration on such activities as knitting which can have an appeal only for the more well-to-do and urbanized sections is not without its drawbacks. It may lead to the impression that the aim of the programme is to teach urban ways to the rural women and that it is meant only for the well-to-do.

Section XIV.—Communications

76. The most difficult problem in this field is that of maintenance of kutcha roads. In view of the key role which communications play in progress of rural areas, help in maintenance of these roads should continue to be provided, and this should be one of the main functions of the Grama Sewak in the post-project phase. Institu-

tionalizing the activity *e.g.*, deciding upon fixed periods in the year and definite procedures for execution of the work would be an obvious advantage which will also facilitate progressive shifting of the initiative to the panchayats. There is also great need for research in this field. For example, any improvement which can be easily and cheaply adopted and which would prolong the life of the road, say by an extra season, would be a tremendous advantage. The use of labour saving devices like small rollers has also to be carefully examined.

77. A road is a most potent instrument of social and economic change, and the effects of the roads construction in the project period have already begun to be available. One marked effect has been the increasing tendency of cultivators to market their produce in the nearest market instead of in the village itself. On many roads, bus services have already started. The general effect has been one of opening up of the country-side, stimulus to trade and transport and more rapid spread of new ideas and ways of living.

Section XV.—Cooperation and Village Industries

78. In order to enable the cooperative organizations to meet the credit needs of the cultivators more adequately and to help them to emerge as the main agency in making available agricultural supplies and in marketing of agricultural produce, a comprehensive programme of re-organization of the cooperative structure is being worked out, which would ultimately reorient the organization of both agriculture and village industry along cooperative lines.

79. The project agency will play a very important role in taking both these programmes to the people and making possible their extension on a country-wide scale, more rapidly and more effectively. Its main contribution in both these fields lies therefore in the future, not in the past.

Cooperation:

80. In the field of cooperation, help in the formation of new societies and strengthening the existing ones have been the main project programmes. The experience in Bombay-Kolhapur illustrates the possibilities of simultaneous advance in agricultural credit and co-operative marketing through suitable linking of the two and establishment of appropriate organizations for both.

81. Though cooperative organizations have been increasingly associated with the work of distributing agricultural supplies, the experience in many projects has not been satisfactory in this respect.

For a considerable time to come, it will be necessary to assist the co-operative agency especially with guidance and provision of trained staff before they can be adequately equipped for taking up these tasks.

82. The large loan funds which are available from different sources and are often administered by different departments have created a problem in many projects. The cultivators, especially the comparatively larger and more influential ones, have availed of loans from several sources. There seems to be no effective arrangement by which an advancing agency can check the existing liabilities of a cultivator before advancing further loans to him, nor there has been any great anxiety towards making such arrangements. Lack of adequate coordination between the advancing agencies and the Revenue department is another handicap. The result of all this has been accumulation of large arrears of debt in several areas which it may be difficult and time-consuming to clear. Better coordination between the advancing agencies and the Revenue department and integration of the former into one or two agencies are steps clearly called for for meeting this situation. In the long run. credit facilities will of course be channelled increasingly through cooperative agencies.

Pilot Projects for Village Industries:

83. The time lag between selection of projects and implementation of programmes may be expected to be much greater, especially in case of the initial projects, than was the case in the first community projects. The deficiencies of organisation, trained personnel and experience are much greater in this field than in agriculture or in any other field with which project programmes have been concerned so far.

84. In drawing up industrial programmes in project areas, it would be useful to view industrial development as part of the larger process of development of the area itself. These programmes should be in accord with the general trends of economic and technological advance in the area. It is especially necessary to take into account the impact of the development programmes themselves in accelerating the process of change—introducing new innovations, new articles of usage and new ways of doing things. The benefits of such integration of industrial advance with the general development of the area work both ways. Not only are additional employment and incomes created in village industry, but advance in other fields (*e.g.* agriculture) and the general development of the area itself are accelerated.

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